

Today's News - Tuesday, April 30, 2013

- MoMA/AFAM outrage continues: Horton has a theory about why the "cabinet of curiosity snuggled against MoMA's glass box" is coming down: "the moderns like their white-boxes and their un-folksy, non-idiomatic spaces. Blame Phillip Johnson." + Filler expands on his earlier fulmination about the "impending cultural vandalism."
- An advocacy website launches in support of preserving the Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centers at Darling Harbour, making the case that "design solutions could be found to increase the buildings' capacity, scale and connectivity in a more sustainable manner."
- Litt looks deep into the VibrantNEO report that "shows how sprawl + urban abandonment is a lose-lose scenario for taxpayers in Northeast Ohio" ("We're investing in the wrong things").
- Charlotte mayor tapped to lead Transportation Department: "Anthony Foxx knows firsthand that investing in world-class infrastructure is vital."
- Hume hails Toronto's "new-found faith in urbanity" with the transformation of a bowling alley and strip mall into a townhouse project.
- Lubenau strolls another Bruner Award finalist, this time in Louisville, KY, where a waterfront park has transformed industrial land along the Ohio River into a "new town commons for the city."
- Durlak and Frankis explain how they've come to see "informal settlements" (a.k.a. slums) "not as problems to be solved, but as design opportunities," focusing on Heliopolis, the largest favela in São Paulo with a project to turn its citizens "into cartographers and advocates of their space."
- A sampling of "today's most intriguing utopias."
- Mariinsky II x 2: eyeful of "Jack Diamond's 'Onxy Opus'" - the design faced early "drive-by criticism," but "early acoustic tests have hushed" many critics.
- Moore visits McLaughlin's Oxfordshire chapel that "could almost make believers of us all. It is paradoxically heavy and light, a bastion and a boat, a wall and a drape...poised, tuned, and well made."
- The Tbilisi Business Centre is "a delicately balanced stack of glass-enclosed disks" - and oh so green (and a "female" mate for its sharp-angled, "male" 1975 neighbor).
- Trampoline parks and bounce houses are bouncing back, partly because of the economic recovery and "partly from an interest in healthy choices for preteens who are too old for playground equipment."
- Koolhaas wins the Dutch Johannes Vermeer Award, and Hadid hoists her Veuve Clicquot Business Woman Award.
- The National Building Museum names Turner Construction Company as its 2013 Honor Awardee for its 111 years of leadership in the construction industry.
- We don't typically cover product news, but find it noteworthy that Herman Miller is buying Maharam.
- Call for entries (deadline looms!): BOFFO Building Fashion: Design and produce a shipping container retail installation in collaboration with Michael Bastian on Manhattan's Pier 57.

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Why Is MoMA Planning to Destroy a Beloved Work of Contemporary Architecture? ...the American Folk Art Museum presents itself as a cabinet of curiosity, snuggled against MoMA's glass box...the moderns like their white-boxes and their un-folksy, non-idiomatic spaces. They also like their floors to line up. Blame Phillip Johnson. By Guy Horton -- Tod Williams Billie Tsien- The Atlantic Cities

MoMA: A Needless Act of Destruction: The tragic turn of events on West 53rd Street is nothing less than impending cultural vandalism, made more odious because it will be carried out by a presumed institutional guardian of high culture and contemporary design. Martin Filler -- American Folk Art Museum; Tod Williams Billie Tsien- New York Review of Books

Save the centres: An advocacy website supports the preservation of Darling Harbour buildings slated for demolition...doesn't attack the developers or the architects of proposed replacements, but makes the case that design solutions could be found to increase the buildings' capacity, scale and connectivity in a more sustainable manner... -- Philip Cox Richardson Taylor & Partners; John Andrews; Robert Woodward [images]- ArchitectureAU (Australia)

VibrantNEO shows how sprawl + urban abandonment is a lose-lose scenario for taxpayers: The biggest regional-planning effort in Northeast Ohio in decades has seen the future, and it isn't pretty...Northeast Ohio Sustainable Communities Consortium is trying to craft a rational, economically and environmentally sustainable vision..."We're investing in the wrong things"... By Steven Litt -- Sasaki & Associates - Cleveland Plain Dealer

Obama taps Charlotte mayor to lead Transportation Department: "Anthony Foxx knows firsthand that investing in world-class infrastructure is vital to creating good jobs and ensuring American businesses can grow and compete in the global economy." - Washington Post

Reclaiming suburbia, one strip mall at a time: Launch of townhouse project on site of...bowling alley and strip mall a sign of the times: ...the 21st-century miracle worker must transform whole suburbs into cities. Yet it's happening right now in Toronto. Even on streets as unrepentantly hostile to human habitation as Wilson Ave., our new-found faith in urbanity is changing the landscape. By Christopher Hume- Toronto Star

On the Road with the Rudy Bruner Award: Louisville Waterfront Park, Kentucky: Transforming industrial land along the Ohio River: Since its inception over 25 years ago, the park has become a new town commons for the city... By Anne-Marie Lubenau -- Hargreaves Associates [images]- Metropolis Magazine

Slums are Necessary: Removing the stigma from informal settlements: ...there is a richness...that makes them as fundamental culturally as any other formalized urban space. We've come to see [them] not as problems to be solved, but as design opportunities...Mark...intends to turn the citizens...into cartographers and advocates of their space. By Meagan Durlak and James Frankis [images]- Metropolis Magazine

Cities on a Hill: Today's most intriguing utopias: ...there are still those who dream of an idealized planet...From seafaring libertarians to a free-market city-state in the Detroit River, here's a sampling of the future-perfect still pulsing in 2013. -- Vincent Ocasia/SimCity Magnasanti; Foster + Partners/Masdar City; Seasteading Institute, San Francisco; The Citadel, Idaho; Belle Isle, Detroit [images]- Foreign Policy magazine

Tour the spectacular new Mariinsky Theatre with Jack Diamond: ...Mariinsky II...the design has faced early..."drive-by criticism"...Early acoustic tests have hushed media criticism. It's the insides that matter. -- Diamond Schmitt Architects [slide show]- CBC (Canada)

Jack Diamond's 'Onxy Opus': After two false starts the New Mariinsky Theatre is set to open this Friday: ...Mariinsky II, which joins two other arts buildings that make up the famed Russian arts complex in St. Petersburg, will be one of the largest opera houses in the world. -- Diamond Schmitt Architects [images]- World Architecture News (UK)

Bishop Edward King chapel, Ripon College: The craft and care of Niall McLaughlin's elliptical, light-filled Oxfordshire chapel could almost make believers of us all: It is paradoxically heavy and light, a bastion and a boat, a wall and a drape...poised, tuned, and well made, a close reflection of the desires of its users and the intentions of its architect. By Rowan Moore [images]- Observer (UK)

London-Based Robin Monotti Architects Bringing Circular Tower to Tbilisi: "If Bank of Georgia's shape can be considered very 'male' because of the sharp angles, Tbilisi Business Centre is 'female' because of its rounded shape"...a delicately balanced stack of glass-enclosed disks that seem to spiral upward... -- Giorgi Chakhava/Zurab Jalaghangia (1975) [image]- The Financial (Georgia and Ukraine)

Padded sells: Trampoline parks, bounce houses multiply as economy catches air: ...developers and local communities more receptive to a broader range of tenants in industrial buildings...the family entertainment industry is growing in part from the economic recovery and partly from an interest in healthy choices for preteens who are too old for playground equipment.- Crain's Detroit Business

Rem Koolhaas Wins Dutch State Prize Johannes Vermeer Award, Zaha Hadid Honored by 41st Veuve Clicquot Business Woman Award [links]- UnBeige

National Building Museum has selected Turner Construction Company as its 2013 Honor Awardee. The selection recognizes Turner's 111 years of leadership in the construction industry...presentation on June 4, 2013 at the Museum's annual Honor Award gala.- National Building Museum (Washington, DC)

Herman Miller Acquires Textile Company Maharam: ...being acquired for approximately \$156 million in cash.- Contract magazine

Call for entries: BOFFO Building Fashion: Design and produce a shipping container retail installation in collaboration with Michael Bastian on Pier 57 in Manhattan; deadline: May 23- Architizer

-- COBE + Transform: BIBLIOTEKET / THE LIBRARY, Copenhagen, Denmark
-- Braga, Porto, Cascais, Marco de Canavezes, Lisbon: Portugal is one of the few countries where you can actually see the political development manifest itself in the architecture. -- Álvaro Siza Veira; Eduardo Souto de Moura

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